

Message Text

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FOLLOWING REPEAT PORT OF SPAIN 273 ACTION SECSTATE INFO
BOGOTA BRIDGETOWN CARACAS GEORGETOWN GUATEMALA KINGSTON
MANAGUA MEXICO PANAMA PORT AU PRINCE SAN JOSE SAN SALVADOR
SANTO DOMINGO TEGUCIGALPA DATED 3 FEB 75
QUOTE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, ETRD, EWWT, XL, XK, XM

SUBJ: MEETING TO ESTABLISH JOINT LATIN AMERICAN-CARIBBEAN
SHIPPING VENTURE

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. MEXICO'S DEPUTY SECRETARY OF FOREIGN RELATIONS,
RUEBEN GONZALES SOSO, HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE IN PORT OF SPAIN
JANUARY 31 TO ANNOUNCE THAT SHIPPING OFFICIALS FROM MEXICO,
VENEZUELA, CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN WILL SOON
HOLD TECHNICAL-LEVEL MEETINGS TO DISCUSS THE FORMATION
OF A JOINT MARITIME TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM TO SERVE THE NEEDS
OF THIS AREA. THAT MEETING IS TO BE FOLLOWED BY A MINISTERIAL-
LEVEL MEETING, TO BE HELD IN COSTA RICA IN MAY. GONZALES SOSO
SAID THAT PARTICIPATION IN THE TECHNICAL LEVEL MEETING HAS
ALREADY BEEN APPROVED BY THE GOVERNMENTS OF TRINIDAD,
VENEZUELA, BARBADOS, JAMAICA, AND COSTA RICA, AND THAT
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INVITATION WILL ALSO BE EXTENDED TO CUBA, HAITI, THE

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, COLOMBIA, GUATEMALA, EL SALVADOR, HONDURAS AND NICARAGUA. THE GONZALES SOSO DELEGATION COM-
PRISED NINE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, PLUS HORACE CLARKE,
DEPUTY SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATION SIN
JAMAICA, AND ENRIQUE GONZALES, DIRECTOR OF FOREIGN TRADE IN
COSTA RICA.

2. PURPOSE OF THE NEW COMPANY IS NOT ONLY TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL
SCHEDULED SHIPPING SERVICES IN THE AREA, BUT ALSO TO BOOST
INTRA-REGIONAL TRADE AND PROVIDE STIMULUS TO THE VARIOUS
REGIONAL ECONOMIC INTEGRATION MOVEMENTS. ACCORDING TO COMMENTS
MADE AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE, ONLY GOVERNMENTS WILL PARTICIPATE
IN THE SHIPPING VENTURE; THE PRIVATE SECTOR WILL BE
EXCLUDED, EVEN THOUGH THE PROPOSED SERVICES ARE TO BE
"NOT COMPETITIVE WITH, BUT SUPPLEMENTARY TO EXISTING
SHIPPING SERVICES."

END UNCLASSIFIED

3. ACCORDING TO GOTT SHIPPING OFFICIALS, THE PORT OF SPAIN
ANNOUNCEMENT DESCRIBED DISCUSSIONS BEGUN AT A JANUARY 31-
FEBRUARY 1 MEETING IN ST. LUCIA, WHERE GOVERNMENT SHIPPING
OFFICIALS FROM ENGLISH CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES HAD FIRST DISCUSSED
THE MEXICAN PROPOSAL. THE TRINIDAD OFFICIALS CONFIRMED THAT
THE GOTT AND OTHER CARIBBEAN GOVERNMENTS PLAN TO PARTICIPATE IN
A TECHNICAL-LEVEL MEETING IN MEXICO LATE IN FEBRUARY. THEY
EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE SURPRISE AND ASTONISHMENT, HOWEVER AT THE FACT
THAT GONZALES SOSO HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE, SINCE THE TRINIDADIAN
H
D
UNDERSTOOD THAT THE SERIES OF MEETINGS (AS WELL AS THE PROPOSED
SHIPPING VENTURE) WERE INTENDED TO BE CONFIDENTIAL.

4. COMMENT: THIS PROPOSAL PRESUMABLY IS PART OF OTHER MEXICAN
AND VENEZUELAN INITIATIVES RECENTLY TAKEN TOWARD CENTRAL AMERICA
AND THE CARIBBEAN. TRINIDAD'S PRIME MINISTER WILLIAMS HAS
REPEATEDLY CALLED FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF SHIPPING SERVICES OWNED
BY CARIBBEAN GOVERNMENTS TO HAUL PETROLEUM AND BAUXITE, IN ADDITION
TO THE TINY SERVICE WHICH NOW HANDLES SOME GENERAL CARGO (WEST INDIES
SHIPPING CO.). THUS TRINIDAD MIGHT WELL BECOME AN ENTHUSIASTIC
SUPPORTER OF A WIDER-RANGING PROPOSAL SUCH AS THIS MEXICAN INITIATIVE
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JUDGING FROM THEIR SURPRISE THAT THE MEXICANS CALLED A
PRESS CONFERENCE, HOWEVER, IT APPEARS THAT THE TRINIDADIAN
STILL HAVE A LOT TO LEARN ABOUT THE MOTIVES BEHIND MEXICAN
INITIATIVES FOR CLOSER RELATIONS WITH CARIBBEAN STATES.
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